Executive Summary

The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing right-of-way acquisition and safety improvements along SR-12 between Escalante and Boulder in Garfield County, Utah from mile post (MP) 59.8 to 86.3. SR-12 is located in south-central Utah and is the only principal highway that runs east of Panguitch, linking US 89 with SR-24.

This portion of SR-12 is currently a two-lane road with tight curves; there are no passing lanes and no median. In recognition of its scenic character, SR-12 has been designated as a Scenic Byway by UDOT and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and as an All-American Road by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Figure 1.1 shows the limits of the 26.5-mile project.

The purpose of the SR-12 project is to do the following:

- Provide adequate space for UDOT to perform ongoing maintenance operations on the roadway and supporting infrastructure
- Improve safety and infrastructure where the roadway facilities are deficient or deteriorating
- Accommodate the wide range of corridor users

Specifically, the project needs are to do the following:

- Acquire additional right-of-way where the right-of-way width is inadequate or undefined to improve access for regular maintenance activities
- Improve deteriorating roadway infrastructures, such as eroding pavement edge and shoulder material as well as deteriorating embankments, barriers, and bridges
- Reduce accidents and driver frustration due to widely varying driver speeds and a lack of passing opportunities

Two alternatives were carried forward for detailed evaluation: the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternative. The Build Alternative consists of right-of-way acquisition, signage, and 14 spot improvements that could reasonably be constructed in the next five to ten years based on future funding availability:

- Obtain right-of-way from MP 68.9 to MP 83.1.
- Replace Calf Creek Bridge at MP 74.5.
- Stabilize roadway at three locations where embankment or barrier is failing:
    - MP 74.8.
    - MP 75.4.
    - MP 77.5 to 77.7.
- Provide six slow-vehicle turnouts, which are intended to allow slow-moving vehicles to pull aside and let other vehicles pass (they are not intended for parking):
    - Eastbound at MP 71.7, 76.2, and 79.5.
    - Westbound at MP 69.9, 72.5, and 83.0.

- Improve two intersections:
  - Hole-in-the-Rock Road at MP 64.4.
  - Calf Creek Recreation Area at MP 75.0.
- Widen roadway at narrow curve known as "The Tank," located at MP 71.0.
- Improve signing for bicycles, animal presence, and roadside hazards along the entire corridor. (Specific locations will be determined during design.)

The following table provides a summary of the Build Alternative's environmental impacts and, if applicable, mitigation.

Executive Summary Table: Build Alternative Impacts

RESOURCE	SUMMARY OF IMPACTS
Land Use	Some wilderness study area (WSA) land may be included in the right-of-way request. It is not possible to calculate the acreage since WSA boundaries have not been clearly delineated. FHWA will be required to manage any overlapping WSA lands to ensure the continued protection for non-impairment.
Community Character and Cohesion	Improved community cohesion by preventing road failures and restrictions caused by slope erosion.
Travel Patterns and Accessibility	Improved travel patterns and accessibility by creating slow-vehicle turnouts and improved intersections.
Relocations	No impacts.
Right-of-Way Acquisition	351.5 acres of Title 23 federal land transfer from BLM to FHWA.
Public Facilities and Services	No impacts.
Utilities	No impacts.
Recreation Resources	Improved safety and accessibility at 2 recreation resources: Hole-in-the Rock Road and Calf Creek Recreation Area.
Environmental Justice	No impacts.
Economics	No impacts.
Pedestrian and Bicyclists	Improved safety and visibility for pedestrians and bicyclists through a signing program and by providing 4' shoulders in areas where spot improvements are constructed.
Air Quality	No impact.
Noise	No impact.
Geology, Soils, and Topography	Minimal impact on geology. Impacts to landslide risk will be mitigated by designing slopes to avoid new landslide hazards; cryptobiotic crust will be disturbed in the area of construction and will be minimized through environmental fencing and mitigated through best management practices (BMPs).
Floodplains	No impacts to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated floodplains; the Calf Creek floodplain will be impacted temporarily until the old channel develops into new wet meadow.
Water Resources and Water Quality	Realignment of approximately 300' linear of Calf Creek will result in a decrease of sediment loading to Calf Creek. Mitigation and permits required for impacts to Calf Creek.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Realignment of approximately 300' of Calf Creek, which is classified as "recreational."
Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.	0.18 acres of permanent impacts and 0.38 acres of temporary impacts to ephemeral dry wash, perennial stream, and wet meadow. Mitigation and USACE 404 permit required.
Wildlife	Mitigation proposed for potential impacts to wildlife.

RESOURCE	SUMMARY OF IMPACTS
Threatened and Endangered Species	USFWS issued a "Not likely to affect" determination for bald eagle and Mexican spotted owl; "no effect" determination for Mexican spotted owl critical habitat in the spring of 2008. Results of a second year of spotted owl survey subsequent to determination found no spotted owls within the area of potential effect (APE). Coordination with USFWS ongoing to record a "no effect" determination.
Invasive Species	Mitigation proposed to minimize the potential to spread invasive species.
Cultural Resources	Impact to 2 sites—one prehistoric lithic scatter site and some Escalante to Boulder Road segments and features; has a determination of "adverse effect." Memorandum of agreement (MOA) between FHWA and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will outline mitigation.
Hazardous Waste	No impact.
Visual Quality	Impacts at 4 locations from slope stabilization and improvements at several areas due to the replacement of concrete Jersey barriers with aesthetic barriers and visually consistent fill materials.
Temporary Construction Impacts	Many resources will be temporarily impacted by construction, refer to Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of construction impacts.